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*The Story of My Life*  
*and Work.*



BY  
BEN HOPE.

Love, James Stanhope.  
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THE AUTHOR





## ASPIRATION.

Holy, Eternal and changeless Goodness at this joyous season, (the "good old summer-time,") we would join the ever beautiful voices of Nature in praising the wisdom and the Goodness of Nature's God, and we ask Thee that we may be ever swift in learning the lessons Thou hast set before us, swift and perfect in reading that holy volume that is written in rock and rill, mountain and valley, flower and fruit, everywhere, for the instruction of these children, Thy little earth-born babes who are struggling toward the threshold of knowledge. Oh, Holy Spirit of Light and Love Divine, guide us in our search for knowledge and for truth, and may we ever do Thee honor in seeking and in finding and in worshiping Thee in the inner Life of all which Thou hast created. Hold us ever in the Bosom of Thy Love. What matters it whether the storms rage wildly around us, or whether we sit in the calm starlight of Love and Peace? Thou art ever with us and Thy strong arm is our sufficient shield. Thy mighty Love will ever sustain us and become thro' our earnest efforts our Light, our Life, and our Holiest Love forever and forevermore. Amen.

—Selected from the author's Scrap Book.

## INTRODUCTION.

"Books are the food of youth, the delight of old age; the ornament of prosperity, the refuge and comfort of adversity; a delight at home, and no hindrance abroad; companions by night in traveling, in the country."—Cicero. And may my book meet these requirements!

"Yes, do send me a book. . . . Not a bargain book, bought from a haberdasher, but a beautiful book, a book to caress—peculiar, distinctive, individual. A book that hath first caught your eye and then pleased your fancy, written by an author with a tender whim, all right out of his heart. We will read it together in the gloaming, and when the gathering dusk doth blur the page, we'll sit with hearts too full for speech and think it over."—Dorothy Wordsworth to Coleridge.

Such a book, gentle reader, is "The Story of My Life and Work," written by the Knight of the Pen.

Yours very truly,

James Stanhope Love ("Ben Hope.")

# The Story of My Life and Work

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## CHAPTER I.

I was born on the morning of the eighth of March, 1887. My home is in the Western section of York County, South Carolina, about seven or eight miles due west of the town of Yorkville, the county seat, and about two or three miles Southwest (if I mistake not?) of Beersheba Presbyterian church, of which house of worship I am a member. It is situated on a small, poor, and rather lonely farm, right near two running streams which are known as Buckhorn and Silver Creek,—names purely local in their origin and use. It is just a small, ordinary log house to which has been recently added a dress of weatherboarding, such as most people live in away down here in the Sunny South. It was built by my father, Mr. William James Love, about thirty years ago, in what was, at that time, a thick wood of pine and oak timber. But since then all of those great woods have been cut down and cleared away, and so I now (July, 1909) live out in the open country;—where the sky is bright and blue, where the little birds sweetly sing in the trees, where the wildflowers bloom, and perfume the atmosphere with their fragrance; where the air is pure, refreshing and sweet, and where the “dry

fly" sings its beautiful summer song—"all summer long."

About six or seven miles a little Northeast of my home, lies Filbert, a small flag station on the Carolina and Northwestern Railway which extends from Chester, South Carolina, to Lenoir, North Carolina,—if I am not in error. It is situated on a high, dry, smooth, sandy, gravelly spot about half way between Yorkville and Clover (South Carolina). And somewhere in the section of territory rather West or Northwest of where I live, lies "The Nation"—a neighborhood so named because of its supposed ignorance, vulgarity, superstition, and illiteracy. I have never visited "The Nation," and so I cannot, here and now, speak with a perfect knowledge of conditions in that place. Nevertheless, I am, in view of certain facts with reference to the weakness of humanity and of all human flesh, almost constrained to believe that the people over there are not nearly so bad as they have been portrayed by their neighbors. For we all know the weakness which people have always had,—and, I suppose, always will have,—for misrepresenting men, things and conditions.

Other points of local interest around here, which are near to my "place of abode," are: The Chapel and New Zion, Methodist churches; Enon and Union, Baptist churches, Ramah and Beth-Shiloh, Presbyterian churches; Smyrna, Hickory Grove and Sharon—the latter three being small towns, of which Hickory Grove is the largest. And other

names, altogether local in their origin and use around my Southern home, are: "The Locust Hill," "Cotton Belt," "Sandy Flat," Cain's Spring—where they used to have great picnics, and "The Coaling Ground"—where they used to make whiskey, become intoxicated, "cuss" and fight among themselves, and live and pass away in ignorance and illiteracy. These are the names of sections of no more than just local interest, I know; but our people love them, I might say, even as all people love and cling to their own respective names, neighborhoods and local traditions. And, too, I might add to this paragraph the fact, that I've heard it said that there never yet has been a person found, who would willingly admit that he or she came from "The Nation"—although "The Nation" does cover considerable territory in Western York, I know. But that is, after all, neither here nor there, I suppose. For who wants to ever boast of being a "Nationite"? Certainly not one have I ever seen, who had any wish to lay claims to this "eminent distinction" which isn't eminent.

We have no telephones, no telegraphs, no automobiles, and no railway trains running in our backwoods home. It is therefore almost an old-time community, I might say; although we do have one store, one school house, and the great R. F. D. Ours is called Filbert No. 1, by reason of the fact that it was the first route,—and, as yet, it is the only one,—to issue from that place. It was instituted on November the 15th, 1904, with Mr. William A.

Carroll as its carrier. He has carried the mail on it ever since with eminent ability. Mr. H. S. Love is our lone merchant-farmer in this settlement of "cottontots"—if I may be permitted to use this expression with reference to them. And I know that they really merit such a title; for cotton is their principal crop.

The R. F. D. is a grand thing for us, and I am quite certain that nobody has ever appreciated it more, or been more deeply grateful to its author for it, than I am today. Therefore I exclaim: All honor to the eminent and distinguished Georgian, Hon. Thomas E. Watson, for his invaluable services in securing the R. F. D. for us country people. May his name never be forgotten; may his fame be deathless; and may this system always remain in our country, as a monument to the honor of the man who had the interests of the common people at heart while he was a member of Congress! "Tom Watson" loves his country with all the intensity of his kindly, sympathetic, fiery, passionate nature; and he labored for its welfare, when he was in Congress, with powerful ability.

I have visited Yorkville and Filbert, passed through "Cotton Belt" and by "Sandy Flat," attended preaching at Beersheba, Beth-Shiloh and Union churches; but have seen none of the other places named in the foregoing, except The Chapel and Silver Creek—a small stream about one-fourth of a mile south from my little log cabin home. It is a clear, fast-flowing stream, the water of which

nearly always remains warm and silvery-looking in the summer sunshine. And so our people have called it Silver Creek. Buckhorn is much larger than the one which I have just described, and sometimes it rises out of its banks, and sweeps away everything in its path that can be swept away. Woe unto all crops that may be found growing near its banks when once it overflows, too; for generally there is nothing worth while left of them. This stream received its name from the horns, or antlers, of the male deer—called buckhorn after it has been made into some useful article. There was once, when the pioneers first came, a very great abundance of game living, and roving about, in the almost unbroken forests of York County; but those good old hunting days have long ago made their departure—nevermore to return, I suppose. There now remain only a very few small birds, rabbits, squirrels, opossums, and—here and there in the creeks about over the country—a few small members of the finny tribe to tell the story of what used to be. Ah! what changes time does bring about! To think it all over gives one a peculiarly sad, sweet, serious feeling—for which I would not take all of the gold that might be in the world today unless I could still retain the power to feel as I now feel while penning these words.

The land in my neighborhood, tho' still very fertile, is not so good and productive as it once was, but corn, oats, wheat, peas, cotton, and almost anything else that is of value, or in any way contributes

to the prosperity of the farmer, can be raised in this place. And so we all love our home-neighborhood quite as well as any neighborhood ever was loved. Long may she live!

My immediate family connections are neither large nor rich, but they have always been respectable. They are the descendants of those Loves (in Ireland pronounced Luvé) who along with numbers of other settlers, emigrated from Ireland to this country some time during the eighteenth century, and pioneered this section of the Palmetto State—whose motto is “Ready with our lives and property.” My great-grandfather Love was one of those devoted patriots who assisted in vanquishing the British and the Tories at the battle of King’s Mountain, during the Revolutionary war. My family names are Love, Land, Davidson and Chambers—but it is scarcely necessary, I suppose, to go any farther into detail along this line here. So I will desist for the time being.

Now I will close this chapter of my story. I could go on for several more pages, but I fear that my readers have already become tired of its slowness toward growing into a real, live, complete narrative. Therefore, I shall add only one more bit of information, pertaining to my own old home neighborhood, to this chapter, in order that my readers may the more readily understand that which is to be narrated in the following pages, to-wit:

The family names, native to this place, are:



Love, Caldwell, Brown, McElwee, Cain, Davidson, Land, Wallace and Smith. These are the names of the oldest and most prominent families who live in old "Buckhorn"—which I am sometimes pleased to call this section.

Said James Montgomery, in speaking of his own native country: "I love thee, O my native Isle!"

Therefore, the Knight of the Pen might well say, in view of the foregoing pages which describe his home community, and in view of that which still remains to be written about it in the following pages,—yes, I repeat, he might well say: "I love thee, O my own native Backwoods Home!" For I am devoted to South Carolina.

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## CHAPTER II.

I am a shut-in, having never been able to walk a step during the whole twenty-two years of my life. I am not a physical weakling, in a literal sense. I just cannot walk; that's all. My general health is good, and I eat and sleep well. When I was yet quite small the late Dr. Bratton, of Yorkville, gave me medical treatment—but it was of no avail whatever. My complexion is fair, my hair is dark and very heavy, my eyes are blue and have a half-sad, half-glad expression issuing from their depths; my forehead and chin are broad and deep-set, and I am a small man. Having been compelled to sit all of my life, I am therefore rather stoop-shouldered, and my limbs are not very well de-

veloped. I can stand up on my feet by catching hold of something or other as a support; and I can see, hear, talk, read, write and study just as well and with just as much satisfaction, as anybody else ever did or ever will.

I have never attended school a day, have never been father away from home than ten miles, have never ridden in a railway train, have never been inside of a "Temple of Justice," have never seen the wide sea; and there are besides these, many other things which I have never seen—neither have I done. But I am happy! Nothing has ever troubled me except my own physical weakness, and my inability to satisfy the cravings of my physical self. It is true that, several times in my life, the future did seem dark and forbidding. Yet, the Father, in His infinite mercy, has never yet failed to give me strength to bear my affliction, and in a spirit which is at once heroic in, and becoming to, one who loves to consider himself "every inch" a man.

When I was a little boy I was ill much of my time. Scarcely a month ever came and went, in those "seas of memory" without my being ill for at least a few days of the time. But as I become older I have gradually become stronger; and so my health is now, I suppose, about as good as the average person's. My powers of endurance, however, are much limited; and I cannot ride very far at one time without being tired and buggy-worn afterward—though I can endure more today than I once could. People have sometimes, and in my

hearing, expressed the possibility of my one day becoming able to walk. But I think not; not only because of my own physical weakness, but also because of a certain mournful presentiment which has long been in my mind. Ah me! the world will never know just how difficult it is for a man of my nature, and my desires, to make himself contented. But the Father has done for me what no other power within the comprehension of mankind could do: He has made me feel absolutely resigned to the life of a shut-in with all of its dreary seclusion from the beauties and pleasures of the world which I love so well.

When I was a boy, I amused myself by whittling. I would sit for hours at a time making all sorts of "little tricks," as we called them; and so I became quite skilful with my pocket knife. I could make boxes, wooden chains, "snakes," tweezers, ink-stands, popguns, flyguns, crossbows, rattles, water guns, bows and arrows, "flutter mills" (water wheels), wind mills and many other "little tricks" which were of no value to me. And I did so love to whittle! My mother would sometimes become tired of so much sweeping—for I kept house and yard literally strewn with shavings—and venture to remonstrate with me about it. But I continued my "whittling club" until my twelfth or thirteenth year, and then I began to seek other forms of amusement and instruction. It seemed to me that I had whittled just about long enough. So I must do something else.

Was all of that whittling done in vain? Did I ever gain anything in a material sense by it? No, it was not in vain—although of course it earned me nothing in a material way. My friends were so kind as to bring me pine boxes from the store to whittle, and it would have been an act of ingratitude for me not to have accepted them. My little boy friends would often request me to make something for them—and I just couldn't refuse. And so when I come to think it all over, to think of the White hearts that I may have perhaps made glad with a popgun, flygun, or some other such small article which only a child knows how to appreciate, I am persuaded into the belief that I could have spent my time to less advantage than that of whittling. And I used to cut my fingers very severely, also; but that did not cure me of any inclination to whittle. The cuts would soon get well, and I would whittle on

And right here let me tell a little incident which might be taken in connection with the foregoing. Once I was ill for a few days. My mother, after I had got well enough for her to leave me for a while, went to see a neighbor, an old woman who then lived near us. Said she to my mother: "Well, an' how is Stanhope? Has he got well yit? I wuz jes' a tellin' Thomas the other day that if Stanhope died there could nothing be said against him but that he jes' cut sticks."

I shall now bring this chapter to an end. And since I have the quoting habit, acquired from twelve

long years of reading, perhaps my readers will have no objection to a quotation from Goldsmith:

"By sports like these are all their cares beguil'd,  
The sports of children satisfy the child."

And after all it might, I believe, be truly said that those things which are delights of childhood ought not to be objects of indifference to us who have passed that period in our journey through life. Looking back over the days of my existence that are gone, I can of a truth say that those things which shine brightest in my memory are those things which have made me feel happy. But that will all be related in the following pages of my book.

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### CHAPTER III.

I have a wheel chair now, which was given to me by my friends, neighbors and kinspeople in the year 1904. I was not aware that they had any such intention toward me until most of the money which was necessary had been collected. Therefore it was something more than just a "pleasant surprise" to me, to know that I had been so very kindly remembered by them. The chair is almost a blessing. While it is not necessary for me to use my chair when I am in the house,—for I can manage to forego the assistance of wheels then,—it is indeed invaluable to me when I wish to get out of doors. My brothers have, when the roads were dry, wheeled me to some of my near neighbors' homes in it; and some-

times I take it to a picnic with me when I go. And since I became owner of this chair on wheels, I have seen many places around my home-farm which I might have never seen had it not been for the chair. I have sometimes spent one or two hours in the woods, whither my brothers were so good as to roll me. And oh! how pleasant, how refreshing, and how inspiring it all was! "A day in the autumn woods!" Oh if I could only just live again one more such day as that I spent once in my life! But I cannot—so "what's the use?"—to quote a popular bit of slang.

I also have a writing desk, a clock, a French harp, an autoharp, a trunk, a fountain pen, a number of books and magazines, and many other little things which go to make life pleasant for me. But that which I prize most of all is the love and devotion of those near and dear to me.

I have heard Senator B. R. Tillman speak. He spoke at Filbert on July the 24th, 1906, and I was one of those who went purposely to hear him—for having always lived in a community of "Tillmanites," properly speaking, I also am a "Tillmanite." Mr. Tillman is a big man; indeed, he has more than once in his public career demonstrated his ability, and it is sincerely to be regretted that he does occasionally run ahead of himself. I have attended four big picnics in my life, and they were all at Filbert.

Once I heard a missionary from China speak, and it made me sad to listen to his description of the

heathenish practices of the Chinese. As he told, in his own simple way, of how the heathen go through so many cruelties in worshipping their gods, I was more than ever impressed with the fact that the whole world needs Christ.

I cast my first vote last year (1908). I voted in the second primary election. South Carolina has, as is almost generally known, the primary system of nominating candidates to offices of public trust and favor. And I consider it a fair method of conducting elections in some respects, but it is not perfect. Considered from every point of view, it is indeed far from being perfect. I am, however, neither a politician nor the son of one; so I will not, here and now, deliver myself of a treatise on politics and economics.

The first wedding ceremony that I ever witnessed was that of Mr. and Mrs. A. S. C., of Hickory Grove, at the home of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. L. B., of this place. This was in the afternoon of Wednesday, September 21st, 1903; and the sacred rites were performed by the Rev. S. H. Hay, of Clover, who was then pastor of Beersheba church. (Mr. Hay was, at that time, a resident of Clover; but I am now unable to give the name of his present home).

Among those whom I have met, at different times in my life, and whom I am pleased to regard as friends, are: Dr. R. A. Bratton, of Yorkville; the late Dr. Hambright, of Smyrna; Dr. W. G. White, Hon. D. E. Finley, M. C., Mr. Lewis, a member of the Yorkville bar, and Dr. J. I. Barron, of Yorkville;

Rev. W. T. Thompson and Hon. T. B. Butler, of Gaffney; Hon. W. H. Stewart, of Rock Hill, State Senator from York County, and Mr. J. S. Drakeford, who used to publish the old Yorkville Yeoman and who printed my first writings in his paper. I am shut in from the world and its joys and pleasures, and one might at first thought be rather inclined to believe that my acquaintance with the outside world would naturally be limited to a degree. But such is not my case—whatever it is with other shut-ins. For I have really seen much of those who, and that which, go to make a world of life, vim, sorrow, energy, and pleasure. I have received letters, post cards, books, papers, and magazines from South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Texas, Mississippi, Tennessee, Virginia, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and California. But what I prize most of all that I have ever received from afar is an autograph letter from "Tom Watson."

So I shall now bring this chapter of my story to an end. It is not a finished record of the period of my life of which it speaks; but it will, I hope, give my readers information about that time sufficient to enable them to form some definite conclusions regarding my shut-in life. Different readers will have different thoughts as they peruse these pages, I know; but let me rest secure in the hope that not one line of my story was penned in vain. Yes, permit me to believe that it will serve to make others, who are better situated in life than I am, more satisfied than perhaps they now are, with their conditions and surroundings. God



"Speed the soft intercourse from soul to soul,  
And waft a sigh from Indus to the Pole!"

—Pope.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

The first and earliest thing or person, of which I have any definite recollection of seeing, was a little negro, Asa—Asa Guy Byars,—to give his whole name, who lived with his parents on my father's farm. He was, I think, about two or three years old, and I don't think I could have been any farther advanced in years than he was; for I know that I was quite small at that period of my life. It seems as if it were almost a dream; still, I can yet see, in memory, a negro woman coming in, nearly every day, to borrow something from my mother. And with her sometimes came a little boy, whom they called Asa—a small, black son of Ham. The woman's name was Cynthia, and she was Asa's mother. The man's name was Bert—Bert Byars; and after living on our farm for about eight years, he removed, with his family, to Arkansas when I was two or three years old. He never came back to South Carolina.

And once, when I was a small boy, there lived, right near me, a man whose name was Mage Ramsay. He came from "The Nation," and was, I think, considered rather a queer personage—though he wasn't bad. He tried to run a little store in our neighborhood, but I remember him only as a tall, slim, erect man, with gray hair, dark complexion,

and faded cotton clothes. He lived in my neighborhood for one or two years; then he went back to "The Nation," whence he never returned. And so that was the last of my "Mr. Mage Ramsey." (The two foregoing paragraphs may not be exactly correct in every particular, as I am telling only that which I can remember; but I trust they are not far from the truth).

I remember the days that I used to spend in a dry goods box, while my mother went about doing her daily household duties,—singing and always patient with me; though I know I must have been of much trouble to her in those days when I was small, young, helpless, and impatient. I remember how they used to laugh at my childish mistakes, and how I used to so hate to be laughed at—I don't believe that I ever shall become accustomed or reconciled to some things, either. I remember how people used to pity me, and try to comfort me, by asking me such questions as "Don't you wish you could run out and play like other children?" etc. Poor, misguided friends! They were trying to comfort an afflicted brother, but they didn't know how to do it.

I remember when my mother taught me my first little prayer, and when she first taught me the alphabet. I remember how I once detested books, and how shy I once was of the society of girls—but how different, how different it is with me now! I remember the happy days that I used to spend at my uncle's home, "just across the creek" from my home; and the fine banjo music which I used to hear, and the friends whom I used to meet there.

Those who played on that instrument, in those far-off days of memory at Uncle Sim's, were: "Winbush" McKnight, "Rufe" Lindsay, Jeff Moore and John Johnston, all colored. And they made music too! I never seemed to tire of listening to the resonant, melodious twang of their instruments. Somehow or other, the music seemed to awaken certain feelings in me that always left me a better boy.

I remember how I used to be carried over to my uncle's house in some one's strong arms, and how I once made a journey home in the night because I had suddenly been seized with a fit of home-sickness. (I think it was generally a colored man who would carry me thus in those days). But after a time I became too large to be carried, and then I had to seek—or some one had to seek for me—other ways of going about. My father once carried me to a neighbor's house, to spend the evening, as the afternoon is called among the country people; and my brothers once took me over to Mr. Thomas Wallace's home, on a small sled, which they had constructed after their own boyish fashion—and according to my directions. At another time they took me to another neighbor's house on their sled, too. And once I was taken over to my uncle's in a wheelbarrow!

And I could go on and on remembering things in this fashion, until I fear that my ever patient readers might at last become too weary to read more; but I shall desist for this time, reserving some recollections for the next chapter. I have so much, and yet so little, to tell in my book that I am almost

afraid it won't be just what I at first intended that it should be: a book pulsing and throbbing with much of my very own life. Writes Shelley, one of my favorite poets,

"Music, when soft voices die,  
Vibrates in the memory,"

and somehow I feel as if I desired to echo his words, they are so beautifully expressive.

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### CHAPTER V.

I have given, in the preceding pages of my story, just an incomplete outline, as it were, of only a part of my life; therefore I shall devote this chapter, and the next, to a concise statement of how I have lived and worked from my earliest recollection until the present day.

Until my fourth or fifth year I lived in a goods box, in the day-time, and was ill and cross. I suppose I must have suffered intense pain in those days, but I have no recollection of it if I did. My family were generally kind to me, and so were the neighbors. The most eminent friend that I had then was Dr. R. A. Bratton, who has always seemed to take much interest in me. I believe that he even now devoutly wishes that it were in his power to cure me of my affliction. A part of my time I spent at my own home, and a part of it I spent at Uncle Sim's, being tenderly cared for at both places. I can remember the names of those who used to live on my father's farm quite as well as if they were

all standing before me now, when these words are being penned; and in my memory I can distinctly see them all as they went about their daily labors which my father gave them. First in memory comes Bert, the colored man whom I have already named elsewhere in my story; and then came Cinty, the colored woman, and little black Asa; Owens Brown and his wife, Dicey, a colored family; Mr. and Mrs. Aaron Page and family, Dave, Bill and Bessie; Mr. and Mrs. Tom Perry and family of several; another family of negroes; Mrs. Martin and her son, whom she called Manuel; and several other tenants whom it is not necessary for me to mention here, as it has not been so very many years since, and as I am telling only that which particularly relates to my life.

I can remember who played the first French harp in my hearing, and how well I loved it then. I can remember the first time I witnessed the painful scene of a negro whipping his or her child, and how sincerely I felt for the little victim. I can remember my first and only death scene in our home, and what a profound change it brought about in my life. Ah! - little girl, whose spirit I believe sometimes hovers near me in my dreams, I have often, but not lately, seen you since you left us; and one day I hope to join you in your celestial home. I remember the first bicycle that I ever saw, and what a sight it was to me then. I remember the first guitar that I ever heard, and how sweet I considered it. I remember how the negro men used to play on the banjo, sing and dance in my uncle's kitchen, and

how I loved it all. The songs which they sang were "Little More Sugar in the Coffee-o," "Old Garfield," "Reuben," "Mountain-top," and "Sunny Tennessee"—along with many others that were more or less musical. I remember how my little brothers used to stay with me, and draw me about on my little arm-chair, and how I used to insist on trying my hand at picking cotton. And how bad I was in those days! Sometimes I have been afraid that I might never be able to live down some of my passionate fits of temper! But O Father, help me to live as I ought to live!

I remember the first fiddle that I ever heard, and who played on it—just for me. Bob Allison, a colored man, who considered himself a fine performer on the violin indeed, was the player; and I enjoyed, then, his playing—though it was wretched. His tunes were "Sally Ann," "Jesse up a Sour Apple-Tree," "Sally Good'n" and "Bile Dem Cabbage Down;" and I think I learned several of them from him—for my soul has always throbbled in unison with the soul of harmony everywhere.

I remember all about what a strange fascination that birds of prey used to have for me, how I used to love to look at the buzzards as they greedily devoured the carcass of some dead animal, and what strange thoughts they would suggest to my mind. But that is only a memory now, as I have long ago come to find other ways of employing myself than just idly dreaming my time away.

I remember the long, happy summer days which I used to spend in conversation with Mr. Thomas

Wallace, my old bachelor friend; and how I enjoyed the stories which he would tell me. Mr. Wallace is a born story-teller, and some of his stories would make a unique book if they could all be written out in an appropriate style. I remember the time when I first became interested in literature, and how I used to love such papers as the old Yorkville "Yeoman," the old "Sunny South," "The Youth's Companion," "The Constitution," "Fireside Gem," "Comfort," "Tom Watson's Magazine," "Watson's Magazine," and "Watson's Jeffersonian Magazine." Ah! yes, those were the happiest days of my whole life; and I shall cling to my memories of them as long as I live in this world. I love them as I would love my soul's mate. I remember all about the strange dreams which I used to have, and what profound impressions they would leave on my mind. But I think some of my day-dreams were much stranger than those which I had in my sleep, however; since I know I am much more of a day-dreamer than any one has ever thought I was. I remember the strange, frightful, fascinating witch, "hant" and ghost tales which I used to hear the colored people relate, with all of a colored person's queer powers of narration and description; and how it all would charm me, while it also would make me feel very strange. I remember the strange fascination that the sun, moon and stars have always had for me,—and even yet I never tire of talking about them. I remember the sweet tunes which my mother used to sing as she went about her daily household labors, and how I enjoyed them. And some-

times she sings them yet, too. I remember the time that I went over to Mr. Wallace's home, on a little sled and through the woods. It was in chestnut-dropping time, and Mr. Wallace gave me chestnuts to eat. I remember the time that I went to see the blind minsterls. It was in the month of October, and the minstrels had entertained at a school house near my home the night before. But as I could not attend the entertainment, I went in daylight to see them. They were resting at a neighbor's house that day;—and I did so want to see and hear them! They were a middle-aged man and his son, who were both blind, and a little girl who wasn't. She was the elder minstrel's daughter; and she was, truly, eyes for both her father and brother,—if ever any one was!

I remember the first time that they took me to church. I was visiting at Uncle Jackson's, ten miles from home, and one Sunday afternoon he took me to Beth-Shiloh. And I think it made some of the congregation feel strange; for they evinced some concern when my uncle carried me in. I also remember the singing and preaching very well; for I truly enjoyed it. They had no organ at Beth-Shiloh then, either; still, they sang well, I thought.

And so I shall now close this chapter. My memory is my dearest treasure in this world, as it is also my most painful one sometimes. For in deed and in truth, "my mind to me a kingdom is."

May I never abuse it!



## CHAPTER VI.

I have acquired my education by studying at home, and without any assistance from any one. My mother, sisters, and brothers first taught me some; after which I have just continued my studies, alone and unassisted. And so for twelve long, weary years I have read, studied and written. Sometimes I have become almost discouraged, too. I somehow felt that I never could attain the height at which I have always aimed; nevertheless, having once started, 'twould never do in the world for me to turn back. My own family have encouraged me all they could; but having been very poor, they could do nothing in a material way. Papers, books, letters, post cards and magazines have been literally showered upon me by my friends and admirers almost everywhere; and while I have read much, I never could read all that I received. Among those who have given me especial encouragement to write are to be found many eminent and distinguished people, as well as many others of lesser degree. Indeed, everybody I have ever seen, or ever heard of has urged me on in my work. Somehow or other, they all seem to believe that I have something in me which they want to see brought out and developed. But I only see it in this light: I am filled with an intense desire to acquire a liberal education, to become a successful author, to earn an honest living, to one day build me a magnificent home, to one day see my own dear mother given a rest from a life-time of drudgery, to battle mightily for the

truth, and to finally become enshrined in the hearts of the common people. I have one other desire, too; but I cannot express it here. It is the world-old yearning which every man or woman possesses for his or her soul's mate. I know that I can never do as others do, the world over; therefore I shall endeavor to find companionship in books. Ah! if I could only do away with my "aching void!" Even now as I write, my soul is troubled by a secret sorrow. Love, inability to satisfy the craving of my carnal nature, my lofty yearnings after that which is beyond my reach, my inability to control my evil and passionate temper, the fear that I am often misunderstood, and countless other little things all combined to form the low, dark, dreary side of my nature. Still, my faith never wavers. It is as strong today as it ever was. The one comfort that I have is my unlimited faith in the Father's goodness. Many and many a time have I prayed, in almost an agony of spirit, for guidance. But let it all pass now. I can tell no more. Draw a curtain over it, and henceforth let my past remain concealed from view. I have lived an honest, true life; therefore my little sorrows do not concern the world.

I have acquired my education by reading, thinking, writing, studying, and observing. I have acquired it by talking with people, contemplating the greatness and goodness of our Father, by reading the Word, by observing the "shallow crowd" or the "passing show," by attending country dances—where they play on the banjo, violin or French harp and dance, and by just striving to learn, every day

of my life, something new and strange. I have acquired it by and from books, from people, from flowers, from music, from poetry, from the earth below, and from the heavens above. I have, literally, received knowledge and instruction from every source within my reach. Still, my life has been a hard struggle, containing a very great deal of sorrow and discouragement. But after all, I believe that mine has not been as hard and pity-inspiring as many another's. Therefore, I am encouraged and comforted. I have always had enough to eat and wear; kind parents, brothers and sisters; loving friends and relatives; and, generally, a paper kind enough to allow me space in its columns.

I remember the first letter that I ever wrote, and how proud of my achievement I was. I can also remember the first one that I ever received. I remember my first visit away from home. It lasted a week. I was at my Uncle Jackson's, ten miles distant; and while I was there, I visited around some in the neighborhood. Briefly stated, my life has been spent in whittling, trying to play on my banjo, reading and writing, visiting, building air castles, attending picnics, preachings and parties, playing on my French harp, and penning "copy" for the local paper's. Mr. Cain once gave me an old banjo, but I've never learned to play on it at all. Being left-handed, the banjo is not an instrument for me.

I remember the first party that I ever attended, and how well I enjoyed it. In the country, they have what they call parties; but which are, in reality, country dances. The young people of the neigh-

borhood all assemble at a neighbor's house, where they have music, dance, talk and laugh, "sport," and have a good time generally until about midnight, when they break up and depart for their respective homes—to dream of the fine time they have had. And of course, many rustic lovers have to "see as many more of the opposite sex home" from these parties, too. I myself have furnished the music for them, on my little French harp, at some of their parties; for which they gladly paid me in coin of the realm. And once, at one of these parties, I fell in love—but I'll reserve that for another time. It would require more time, space, and ornamentation than I now have at my disposal to tell my own love story. Nevertheless, I have one. Sometime I intend to publish it—but not now. Will only say that my own love story has made a man of me.

I have written for the old Yorkville "Yeoman," the old "Sunny South" of Atlanta, Ga., "The Practical Farmer" of Philadelphia, the old Yorkville "New Era," the Rock Hill "Record," and am now working on The Gaffney Ledger. Life is pleasant for me now. I have lived to overcome many of my troubles, and success is about to crown my efforts. I have penned an immense amount of "copy" for The Ledger, but my message has not been delivered yet. Next year I am going to continue my work—if it be the Father's will. The next chapter will describe my home life as it is today.

"A sacred burden is this life to bear,  
Look on it, lift it, bear it solemnly,

Stand up and walk beneath it steadfastly,  
Fail not for sorrow, falter not for sin,  
But onward, upward, till the goal ye win."

—Kemble.

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## CHAPTER VII.

I have not given, in the foregoing pages, quite as complete a history of my life and work as was possible; for lack of time and space forbade my doing so. Nevertheless, I hope that my readers will not be too badly disappointed with my book. I have truly labored hard and devotedly on this manuscript, and sometimes I have come very near giving it up as an impossible task. But each time that thought entered my mind, it was quickly followed by another and a stronger. My friends have done so much for me since I began my literary career that, somehow or other, I just could not afford to lay down my work at this stage. And, too, what my brain had created my brain refused to disown. Hence this little book is timidly and prayerfully submitted to the reading public.

I am studying every day now. I have acquired some education along the lines of English, grammar, history, and general literature; but I must admit that I am sadly deficient in other branches of learning. Will N. Harben is my favorite novelist living today, and Thos E. Watson is my favorite writer on politics and economics. I love my file of old "Watson's" very devotedly, too. Percy Bysshe Shelley is my favorite poet of yesterday, and Frank

L. Stanton is my favorite singer of today. I consider Shelley's lines on "The Cloud" the most sublime thing of the sort that I have ever read. "Rock of Ages" is my favorite hymn, and "Home Sweet Home" is one of my favorite pieces of music; although I've so many musical favorites that it is hard for me to make one selection from them all. I love beauty in all things and everywhere; indeed, my very soul yearns, always, for beauty, and sympathy, and harmony, and companionship, and love. I can remember some incidents in connection with my early life which always make me sad. I am by nature rather light-hearted; but I believe that, away down below the surface, I am capable of feeling very tenderly and sympathetically.

I have my father and mother, and brothers and sisters with me yet; and they are all very kind to me. And the most beautiful thing about their devotion is, that it is not at all a put on—it is as natural for them to be so as for their hearts to beat. I know that I am not always satisfied; for I am only human, after all. Still, my happiness does not depend upon my securing other companions besides those I have always had with me. Other girls have made impressions on me, it is true; and I love to build air castles around "the dearest one." But that is all. I know that I do love somebody, though my affliction forever cuts me off from the realization of "love's young dream." When I first began to write for publication, I seemed lonely and forsaken. But now my correspondence has made me many warm friends. It is generally conceded by every

one that the world has little charity indeed; but only those who work on the newspapers know just how much goodness there is in it; all that it contains in every form of creation shows some good, I believe. And sometimes the manifestations of my friends' love for me almost bring the tears to my eyes. It was only the other day that I received a queer little communication which awakened the tenderest of sentiments in my heart. It was a short letter, and the price of one copy of this book, from a little unknown girl. Ah! what emotions of sympathy and gratitude that passed in my mind as I persued her dear, little childish-penciled note!

Kind friends, one and all, I have not told the complete story of my life—because I couldn't. I should love to do so yet, but I cannot. I have not lived enough of it. When I am quiet and thoughtful, I can remember many things which should have found place in the foregoing. Therefore when I go to have a new edition published—which I intend to do—I shall perhaps be able to tell my complete history.

As the closing lines are being written this September afternoon my mind is busy among the ashes of other days. Somehow, it is too full for speech. I would fain go on—but something bids me stop. So I must obey the Voice within. But the finest, most sublime, beautiful and tender sentiments of my soul must remain untold for yet a little while to come. I have not related how I used to make "gins," "threshers," etc., with my pocket knife; how I used to think there was nothing to compare with the beautiful spring-time and autumn

in Dixie; and neither have I given any of our old play songs. But farewell! gentle readers. Read in these pages my story, and then remember a poor, lonely, afflicted shut-in brother who longs for your devoted love and sympathy. Girls, with brown eyes and blue, remember me.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

As I have at last succeeded in composing something which I am pleased to call a book, a few words in closing may not be out of place. So, "here goes"—to use a common expression:

The first part of my book is a section from my scrap book—"Aspiration"—which I consider one of the finest, purest, most sublime things of the sort that I have ever read anywhere. The author of it is unknown to me; and the words in brackets, "the 'good old summer-time,' " are of my own insertion, since my story was written in the summer of this year (1909.)

The second part of my book—"II Introduction: James Stanhope Love, R. F. D. No. 1, Filbert, S. C., July 16th, 1909,"—is, for the most part, composed of selections from Cicero and Dorothy Wordsworth. They, too, have been chosen because of their literary worth.

The third part of my book—Chapter I—closes with a quotation from James Montgomery: "I love, thee O my native Isile!"

The fourth part of my book—Chapter II—closes with a quotation from Goldsmith:—



"By sports like these are all their cares beguil'd,  
The sports of children satisfy the child."

The fifth part of my book—Chapter II—closes with a quotation from Pope:—

"Speed the soft intercourse from soul to soul,  
And waft a sigh from Indus to the Pole."

The sixth part of my book—Chapter IV—closes with a quotation from Shelley:—

"Music, when soft voices die  
Vibrates in the memory."

The seventh part of my book—Chapter V—closes with a quotation from Dyer: "My mind to me a kingdom is."

The eighth part of my book—Chapter VI—closes with a quotation from Kemble:—

"A sacred burden is this life to bear,  
Look on it, lift it, bear it solemnly,  
Stand up and walk beneath it steadfastly,  
Fail not for sorrow, falter not for sin,  
But onward, upward, till the goal ye win."

The ninth part of my book—Chapter VII—is a sort of description of my present state. And the tenth part of my book—Chapter VIII—is just a peroration, as it were, of the preceding.

The summer has departed; and with many other things, it has taken away the sweet hours that I have spent over my manuscripts. The autumn has once more returned to Dixie; and while we heave a

sigh for the departed summer, we also rejoice at autumn's coming. The Father has been so good to us this year! And because of His eternal love, I know He will continue to bless us. The cotton is opening, the trees are turning to a saffron hue, the dry ~~le~~ sings its last tune for this year, the whip-poorwill is silent, the frost is truly coming, the boys are out hunting 'possums at night, autumn fruits are ripening, and Autumn with all of her natural splendor is with us once more.



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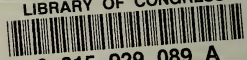




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